

REPLACEMENT  
ART 36 AMDT

What is claimed is:

1. A method of making a fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition and forming a fabricated article therefrom comprising the steps of:

- 5 (1) introducing into an extruder a thermoplastic polymer,  
(2) introducing into the extruder a masterbatch comprising an elastomer,  
(3) plasticating the thermoplastic polymer and the masterbatch in the extruder forming a molten thermoplastic polymer composition,  
(4) introducing a reinforcing fiber material into the molten thermoplastic  
10 polymer composition,  
(5) extruding a molten, fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition and  
(6) forming a fabricated article comprising the fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition.

2. The method as taught in Claim 1 further comprising, between the steps of (5) and  
15 (6), the steps of:

- (i) extruding the molten fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition through a die forming a continuous extrusion of heated fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition having a desired cross-sectional shape,  
(ii) conveying the continuous extrusion of heated, fiber-reinforced thermoplastic  
20 polymer composition to a cutter,  
(iii) cutting the continuous extrusion into a plurality of preforms, and  
(iv) conveying the preforms away from said cutter into a compression mold, a vacuum forming mold or a thermoforming mold.

3. The method as taught in Claim 2 wherein the mold in step (iv) is a compression  
25 mold.

4. The method as taught in Claim 1 further comprising, between the steps of (5) and (6), the steps of:

- (v) conveying the molten, fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition to a accumulator,  
30 (vi) accumulating a desired amount of heated fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition forming a shot and  
(vii) injecting the shot into an injection mold.

5. The method as taught in Claim 1 further comprising, between the steps of (5) and (6), the steps of:

(viii) extruding the molten, fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition through an extrusion die forming a parison of a desired shape,

(ix) placing the parison within a blow mold,

(x) closing the blow mold and

(xi) injecting a gas into the blow mold.

6. The method as taught in Claim 1 further comprising, between the steps of (5) and (6), the step of:

(xii) extruding the molten, fiber-reinforced thermoplastic polymer composition through an extrusion profile die having a desired shape.

7. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the extruder is a single screw extruder or a twin-screw extruder.

8. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the elastomer is a polyolefin elastomer.

9. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the elastomer is a substantially linear polyethylene polymer or a linear ethylene polymer comprising ethylene and a C<sub>3</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> alpha olefin.

10. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the elastomer is a substantially linear polyethylene polymer or a linear ethylene polymer comprising ethylene and an alpha-olefin selected from the group consisting of propylene, butene, hexene or 1-octene.

11. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the elastomer is a substantially linear polyethylene polymer comprising ethylene and 1-octene.

12. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the masterbatch further comprises talc, clay, wollastonite, mica, calcium carbonate, a thermal stabilizer, an ultra violet (UV) light stabilizer, a coupling agent, colorants, an antioxidant, an antistat, a clarifier, a nucleating agent, a flame retardant, or mixtures thereof.

13. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the reinforcing fiber material is continuous or discontinuous and is glass fibers, carbon graphite fibers, polyester fibers, polyaramid fibers, hemp fibers, metal fibers or metal-coated fibers.

14. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the reinforcing fiber material is continuous.

15. The method as taught in Claim 1 wherein the reinforcing fiber material is a plurality of continuous glass fibers.

16. The method as taught I Claim 1 wherein the fabricated article is a vehicle bed liner; a vehicle instrument panel, a vehicle cowl, a vehicle fender, a vehicle panel, a vehicle body cover, a vehicle underbody, an electrical equipment device housing, a crate, lawn and garden furniture, a floor covering or a wall covering, wherein the vehicle is a car,  
5 a truck, a snow mobile, a personal water craft, an all terrain vehicle, a lawn and garden tractor, farm equipment or a golf cart.

17. The method as taught I Claim 1 wherein the fabricated article is a golf cart underbody.